United Nations A/61/PV.84

General Assembly

Sixty-first session

Official Records

84th plenary meeting
Friday, 22 December 2006, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Ms. Al-Khalifa ..... (Bahrain)

The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

Tribute to the memory of His Excellency Saparmurat Niyazov, President of Turkmenistan

The President: Before proceeding to the items on our agenda, it is my sad duty to pay tribute to the memory of the late Saparmurat Ataevich Niyazov, President of Turkmenistan, who passed away on Thursday, 21 December 2006.

On behalf of the General Assembly, I request the representative of Turkmenistan to convey our condolences to the Government and the people of Turkmenistan and to the bereaved family of His Excellency Saparmurat Niyazov.

May I now invite representatives to stand and observe a minute of silence in tribute to the memory of His Excellency Saparmurat Niyazov.

The members of the General Assembly observed a minute of silence.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Niger, who will speak on behalf of the Group of African States.

Mr. Abani (Niger) (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the Group of African States, I would like to extend to the Government and the people of Turkmenistan, as well as to the bereaved family of the deceased, our deepest condolences on the demise on 21 December 2006 of His Excellency President Saparmurat Niyazov. May his soul rest in peace.

At this difficult moment, the African Group would like to convey its sympathy and solidarity to the brotherly people of Turkmenistan. This is also the place and the time to pay a well-deserved tribute to President Saparmurat Niyazov for his outstanding work throughout his entire presidency on behalf of his country and international peace and security. The people of Turkmenistan will long remember him as an exceptional leader who supported national unity and who, through his tireless efforts, greatly contributed to their well-being and development.

The African Group earnestly hopes that the people of Turkmenistan can overcome this great loss and continue to pursue development in peace and stability. For its part, Africa remains prepared to continue and strengthen the cooperation and friendly relations it has initiated with Turkmenistan.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Malaysia, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Asian States.

Mr. Zainuddin (Malaysia): On behalf of the Group of Asian States, I wish to extend our deep respect to the Government and the people of Turkmenistan on the sad occasion of the passing of His Excellency Mr. Saparmurat Niyazov, President of Turkmenistan.

The late President Niyazov will be remembered by his people for his leadership in making Turkmenistan a proud sovereign nation that is able to stand on its own among independent and sovereign

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nations today, including in the General Assembly. He brought about change to the lives of his beloved people and country. He was a man of vision — a vision of a prosperous and progressive Turkmenistan.

It is with profound sadness that I convey the sincere condolences of the members of the Asian Group to the Government and the people of Turkmenistan and to the bereaved family members of the late President Saparmurat Niyazov on his passing. We pray that they find strength in this period of bereavement.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Croatia, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Eastern European States.

Mr. Muharemi (Croatia): I stand here on behalf of the Group of Eastern European States to express our sincere condolences to the citizens, the people and the Government of Turkmenistan on the passing away of their President, His Excellency Mr. Saparmurat Niyazov, who was also known as Turkmenbashi.

The late President Niyazov will be remembered as the first President of independent Turkmenistan, since 1991, and as the well known leader of Turkmenistan for more than 20 years. The Group of Eastern European States hopes that the leaders and the people of Turkmenistan will manage to hold peaceful and democratic elections for the new leadership following Mr. Niyazov's sad passing. We also hope that the new leadership will act to promote cooperation with the countries of the Central Asian region and the world as a whole.

All our thoughts remain with the people of Turkmenistan at this sad time.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Grenada, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States.

Ms. Rouse (Grenada): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the States members of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States, and to join previous speakers in extending condolences to the Government and the people of Turkmenistan on the sudden demise of His Excellency President Saparmurat Niyazov. We would also like to take this opportunity to extend condolences to the bereaved family of the late President during this time of loss.

The late President will be remembered for leading his country to independence and for promoting and maintaining traditional Turkmen culture. Since joining the United Nations, in 1992, under President's Niyazov's leadership Turkmenistan has contributed to the work of the United Nations, in particular to the peace processes in Tajikistan and Afghanistan.

The Group of Latin American and Caribbean States expresses its wish for a smooth transition of power and for the continued growth and prosperity of the country.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Malta, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Western European and other States.

Mr. Camilleri (Malta): I should like, on behalf of the Group of Western European and other States, to convey our condolences to the Government and the people of Turkmenistan on the death of their President, Mr. Saparmurat Niyazov. Our condolences go also to the members of his family grieving at his loss.

Mr. Niyazov had been the President of Turkmenistan since it gained independence, on 27 October 1991. Starting from humble beginnings and orphaned at an early age, Mr. Niyazov moved forcefully forward towards the leadership of his country, both before and following independence in 1991.

The people of Turkmenistan have a long history, a proud culture and great economic potential. In recent years Turkmenistan has sought to play a role in the promotion of stability in its region of Central Asia, including through its policy of permanent neutrality. It is an active member of the international community in such key institutions as the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. As the Secretary-General has recalled, Turkmenistan has made important contributions to the United Nations peace processes in Tajikistan and Afghanistan.

We hope that, once their period of mourning is over, the people of Turkmenistan will find renewed opportunities to pursue their road to development in freedom, peace and the rule of law, thereby contributing also to the further promotion of security and stability in their region and beyond.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the United States, who will speak on behalf of the host country.

Mr. Melrose (United States of America): The United States extends its condolences to the family of the late President and to the people of Turkmenistan on their loss. We look forward to continuing our relations with Turkmenistan, to build a stable, democratic and prosperous future that provides justice and opportunity for the people of Turkmenistan.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Kazakhstan, who will speak on behalf of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

Mr. Kazykhanov (Kazakhstan) (*spoke in Russian*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) to honour the memory of Saparmurat Niyazov, President of Turkmenistan, who, to our deep grief, passed away on 21 December 2006. Mr. Niyazov will remain in our memory as an eminent political leader and statesman, and as a man with unwavering vital energy and tireless optimism.

President Niyazov played a key role in establishing and strengthening the statehood of an independent Turkmenistan and in developing the country's economic potential. His policy of neutrality helped to determine Turkmenistan's place in the contemporary system of international relations and his country's involvement in international economic relations, as well as in establishing multilateral cooperation based on the principles of mutual security and respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Turkmenistan and the States of CIS are linked by a common history and cultures, as well as by political and economic interests. Developing relations of friendship, peace and mutually beneficial cooperation is in the vital interests of the peoples of our States and benefits the cause of peace and security.

On behalf of the members of the Commonwealth of Independent States, I would like to express our sincere condolences to the people and the Government of Turkmenistan and to the family and friends of President Saparmurat Niyazov.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Ukraine, who will speak on behalf of the Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Moldova group.

Ms. Martina (Ukraine): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the States members of the Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Moldova group (GUAM).

The GUAM States would like to express their deepest condolences at the death of the President of Turkmenistan, Saparmurat Ataevich Niyazov. We pay tribute to a leader whose role in the development of Turkmenistan was a historic one. A statesman of outstanding personality, he was our countries' good friend. It is our strong belief that the ancient wisdom of the people of Turkmenistan will help that brotherly nation to overcome this loss with dignity, thereby paving the way to democracy and remaining a stable and reliable partner to many countries.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Turkmenistan.

Mrs. Ataeva (Turkmenistan) (*spoke in Russian*): First of all, on behalf of the Government and the people of Turkmenistan, I would like to express our deep appreciation to the Chairpersons of the regional groups, Permanent Representatives of United Nations Member States and heads of missions of international organizations to the United Nations for the words of condolence they have addressed to the people of Turkmenistan and to my country's Government at this difficult time. We deeply appreciate the support and solidarity of the international community. I am grateful to everyone gathered today in this Hall to share our grief and pain.

The people of Turkmenistan have suffered a great loss. On 21 December at 1.10 a.m., cardiac arrest quickly resulted in the death of Saparmurat Niyazov, President of Turkmenistan. Mr. Niyazov was the leader of Turkmenistan for 21 years. Our people's new era — one of reborn statehood — is inextricably associated with our leader. A true leader, President Niyazov was able to carry out our ancestors age-old dream of establishing a united and independent State.

In heading the country and determining the true role of the Turkmen people in world history, President Niyazov ensured that the entire world knew of the heroism of our ancestors and the contribution of the people of Turkmenistan to the development of world civilization. The glorious years during which Mr. Niyazov led our country confirmed his gift of vision and skill in determining true priorities, his uncommon abilities in leading a State and people and his talent as a diplomat and wise and humane person.

Once Turkmenistan achieved independence, Mr. Niyazov developed the major principles upon which to build our State. The thoughtful and consistent

domestic and foreign policy of Saparmurat Niyazov ensured that we would have the major conditions and opportunities for the successful development of an independent State. The goals he set epitomized the interests of the people. Our major accomplishments were in keeping with the spirit of the people, and were heartily embraced by every citizen of Turkmenistan. Mr. Niyazov restored and successfully developed the nearly moribund spiritual and cultural life of our people, of which we are so proud: its glorious history, its priceless literary heritage, its ancient mother tongue and its illustrious ceremonies and traditions.

Mr. Niyazov was equally respectful of the representatives of all nations and peoples living in Turkmenistan. He affirmed in the country the principles of unity, solidarity and mutual trust. He raised human dignity in Turkmenistan to a high level and was a major treasure of our society.

Under his leadership, we accomplished a tremendous amount with regard to our economy and raised the standard of living of our people. As a result of Turkmenistan's peaceful relations with States throughout the world, we were able to gain a place of authority in the international arena. Through the initiative and leadership of President Niyazov, Turkmenistan declared and carried out a foreign policy of permanent neutrality, which was recognized by the international community through the adoption of General Assembly resolution 50/80 A on 12 December 1995.

President Niyazov made an outstanding contribution to the achievement and strengthening of peace, security and stability in the Central Asian region. Through his initiative, and in close cooperation with the United Nations, several rounds of negotiations were held in Turkmenistan in 1995 and 1996 that made it possible to reach a peace settlement to the civil conflict in Tajikistan. President Niyazov made a tremendous personal contribution in organizing and carrying out in Turkmenistan, under the auspices of the United Nations, direct talks between the warring parties to the conflict in Afghanistan. Subsequently, through his decision, Turkmenistan made available its territory and infrastructure, as well as the necessary technical and logistical support, for the transport of international humanitarian cargo to the Afghan people. That continues today.

At this difficult time, the people of Turkmenistan, being committed to the principles of Turkmen national statehood established by President Niyazov as the foundation of an independent State, will continue to follow the political course of our leader. Our country's domestic and foreign policy will remain intact, based on the principles of peace, humanism and justice. Turkmenistan will also continue to follow its policy of neutrality based on good-neighbourly relations, mutual respect, equality and mutually beneficial cooperation with all State around the world, while at the same time fully meeting its obligations under the Charter of the United Nations through bilateral and multilateral agreements, treaties and conventions to which we are a party.

The Turkmen people's faith in and love for President Niyazov is limitless and unchanging. The people of Turkmenistan wholeheartedly live by the vows of our leader. We will be dedicated to him and to what he has done as a great man. We shall continue what he has begun.

Agenda item 157

Support by the United Nations system of the efforts of Governments to promote and consolidate new or restored democracies

Draft resolution (A/61/L.51)

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Qatar to introduce draft resolution A/61/L.51.

Mr. Al-Sulaiti (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): I have the honour to report to the General Assembly on the successful outcome of the Sixth International Conference of New or Restored Democracies, which was organized by the Government of the State of Qatar from 29 October to 1 November 2006, in cooperation with the United Nations. More than 100 Member States participated in the Conference, together with parliamentarians representing 69 countries and representatives of 100 civil society organizations.

I now have the honour to introduce draft resolution A/61/L.51, entitled "Support by the United Nations system of the efforts of Governments to promote and consolidate new or restored democracies". Let me express the deep appreciation and profound gratitude of the Permanent Mission of the State of Qatar to Her Excellency Sheikha Haya Rashed

Al-Khalifa, President of the General Assembly, whose distinguished presence, active participation, warm friendship and effective support at the Doha Conference enriched and added depth to its deliberations.

The International Conferences of New or Restored Democracies began a distinct movement to promote democratic values, stimulate a new brand of international cooperation in favour of democratization. They bring a new focus to the international development agenda. The previous five important International Conferences were held in Manila, Philippines; Managua, Nicaragua; Bucharest, Romania; Cotonou, Benin; and Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia.

The Sixth International Conference of New or Restored Democracies reaffirmed the core principles and values of democracy and offered new perspectives and dimensions regarding the need to promote, preserve and consolidate the democratization process throughout the world. The Conference had two main objectives: to enhance the linkages among democracy, peace and social progress on the global development agenda and to initiate systematic implementation and follow-up measures to consolidate the achievements and recommendations resulting from the previous important International Conferences of New or Restored Democracies, the first of which was held in 1988.

A major feature of the Sixth International Conference of New or Restored Democracies was its interactive dialogues, round tables and forums, which brought together Government representatives, parliamentarians and representatives of civil society organizations. The Conference had three substantive outcomes: the Doha Declaration, adopted by the Governments; a Joint Statement of Government representatives, parliamentarians and representatives of civil society; and a final report to be prepared by the United Nations.

The Doha Declaration reaffirmed the resolve of numerous United Nations Member States to adhere to universally relevant democratic values, principles and standards. It also reflected the support of concerned member States of the Conference for the establishment of follow-up steps to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the International Conference movement. The Doha Declaration requested the Chair of the Sixth International Conference to take the necessary measures to guarantee appropriate implementation and follow-up of the recommendations of the International Conferences, with the assistance of an advisory board, over a three-year period.

The Joint Statement of Government representatives, parliamentarians and representatives of civil society organizations announced the commitment to cooperate and build effective partnerships among those three prominent groups in pursuit of core democratic values and principles. The Joint Statement welcomed the Doha Declaration and called for the establishment of a democracy advisory commission and an international steering committee to implement the recommendations of the Parliamentary Forum and the Civil Society Forum, respectively. The final report of the Conference is being prepared in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme and the Department of Political Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat.

The Permanent Mission of the State of Qatar to the United Nations recently submitted several communications to the Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly and all Permanent Missions to the United Nations. On 14 November 2006, the Permanent Mission of the State of Qatar sent a letter to the Secretary-General (A/61/581) transmitting the Doha Declaration and the Joint Statement. On 16 November 2006, the Permanent Mission sent a letter to the President of the General Assembly (A/61/235) requesting the inclusion of an additional item in the agenda of the sixty-first session of the General Assembly. That request was approved with the addition of agenda item 157, entitled "Support by the United Nations system of the efforts of Governments to promote and consolidate new or restored democracies". Finally, the text of a draft resolution was transmitted on 29 November 2006 to all Permanent Missions, and several informal consultations were held earlier this month with many Permanent Missions. We are grateful to our partners for their support.

The draft resolution before members today, entitled "Support by the United Nations system of the efforts of Governments to promote and consolidate new or restored democracies", draws on agreed language, particularly from General Assembly resolutions 60/253, 58/13 and 58/281. The draft resolution has four objectives: to provide information about the concrete outcomes of the Sixth International

Conference, that is, the Doha Declaration and the Joint Statement; to emphasize the close cooperation in that regard between the United Nations and Governments, as well as among parliaments, civil society and Governments; to highlight the special focus of the Sixth International Conference, which was the need for systematic implementation of the recommendations of the International Conferences; and to request the Secretary-General to include in his report to the General Assembly at its sixty-second session a summary of the outcomes of the Sixth International Conference under the item entitled "Support by the United Nations system of the efforts of Governments to promote and consolidate new or restored democracies".

The Permanent Mission of the State of Qatar would like to express its deep appreciation and gratitude to all those Governments that participated in the Doha Conference and to those who cooperated with us in preparing the draft resolution. I should like to announce that, since the introduction of the draft resolution, the following countries have joined the list of sponsors: Albania, Andorra, Angola, Australia, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Burkina Faso, the Central African Republic, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, El Salvador, the Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Maldives, Mali, Malta, the Republic of Moldova, Monaco, Mongolia, Nicaragua, the Russian Federation, San Marino, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Turkey, Ukraine and the United Republic of Tanzania. I thank all the countries that have become sponsors of the draft resolution.

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/61/L.51. May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt the draft resolution?

Draft resolution A/61/L.51 was adopted (resolution 61/226).

The President: I shall now call on the representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, who wishes to speak in explanation of position on the resolution just adopted. May I remind delegations that explanations of position are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Ms. Giménez-Jiménez (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela has always played a leading role in the consolidation of democratic values and the values of peace and solidarity. Today, we welcome this consensus decision further committing us to support the United Nations system in its endeavour to promote and consolidate new or restored democracies. However, I would point out that the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document, referred to in the fourth preambular paragraph, does not represent any mandate for our Republic.

The President: We have heard the only speaker in explanation of position. I call now on representatives wishing to make statements on this item.

Mr. Shinyo (Japan): The Government of Japan welcomes the adoption by consensus of the resolution entitled "Support by the United Nations system of the efforts of Governments to promote and consolidate new or restored democracies". We would like to take this opportunity to express our sincere gratitude to the Government of Qatar and its delegation for hosting the Sixth International Conference of New or Restored Democracies in Doha last month and for its efforts to take the initiative on this resolution.

Japan attaches great importance to democracy as a universal value, along with fundamental freedoms, the rule of law and human rights, which are the basis for the realization of happiness and the prosperity of each individual. We consider that the consolidation and strengthening of democratic institutions will lead to the establishment of peaceful and prosperous societies and, in turn, will contribute to the peace and stability of the whole world.

Last month, our Foreign Minister, Taro Aso, made a speech entitled "Arc of freedom and prosperity: Japan's expanding diplomatic horizons", in which he stressed the importance, as we advance our diplomatic endeavours, of universal values such as democracy, freedom, human rights, the rule of law and the market economy.

In the resolution just adopted, the General Assembly urges the Secretary-General to continue to improve the capacity of the Organization to respond effectively to the requests of Member States by providing adequate support for their efforts to achieve the goals of good governance and democratization, including through the activities of the Democracy Fund at the United Nations. My delegation wishes to take

this opportunity to announce that the Government of Japan has decided to make a contribution to the Democracy Fund in the amount of $10 million.

Japan sincerely hopes that this assistance through the United Nations to those countries that wish to promote and consolidate their democracies will contribute to the realization of a more peaceful and prosperous world.

Mr. Mohamed (Yemen) (*spoke in Arabic*): My country joined the consensus on the item entitled "Support by the United Nations system of the efforts of Governments to promote and consolidate new or restored democracies", based on our participation in many conferences and activities relating to the draft resolution just adopted.

First among them was the Forum on Emerging Democracies, held in Sana'a in 1999, with the participation of a number of young or emerging democracies from Asia, Africa and Latin America, other Governments, several international and regional organizations, including the United Nations, and representatives of civil society. The Forum was the first of its kind and resulted in the Sana'a Declaration. The General Assembly took note of the Forum in resolution 55/96 of 4 December 2000.

The Sana'a Declaration included a number of important recommendations for strengthening democracy, particularly in developing countries. Most unfortunately, however, the resolution just adopted makes no reference to resolution 55/96.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 157?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 3 (*continued*)

Credentials of representatives to the sixty-first session of the General Assembly

(b) Report of the Credentials Committee (A/61/648)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Committee in paragraph 12 of its report. The draft resolution reads as follows:

"The General Assembly, having considered the report of the Credentials Committee and the recommendation contained therein,

"Approves the report of the Credentials Committee."

I now give the floor to the Chairman of the Credentials Committee, Mr. Gilles Noghès of Monaco.

Mr. Noghès (Monaco), Chairman of the Credentials Committee (*spoke in French*): It is my honour to inform the Assembly that, in addition to the Member States listed in paragraph 5 of the report of the Credentials Committee for the sixty-first session of the General Assembly (A/61/648), credentials were also duly submitted under rule 27 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly by Liechtenstein, Monaco, Montenegro, Peru and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

In addition to the Member States mentioned in paragraph 6 of the report of the Credentials Committee, Belgium, Belize, Ethiopia, Mozambique and Saint Lucia have communicated to the Secretary-General information concerning the appointment of their representatives to the sixty-first session of the General Assembly by means of a facsimile communication from the Head of State or Government or Minister of Foreign Affairs or by means of a letter or note verbale from the Permanent Mission concerned.

The President: The General Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Credentials Committee in paragraph 12 of its report. The Credentials Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 61/227).

The President: Before giving the floor to the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran, who wishes to speak in explanation of position on the resolution just adopted, may I remind delegations that explanations of vote or position are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Mottaghi Nejad (Islamic Republic of Iran): My delegation joined the consensus on the resolution just adopted. However, I would like to express my delegation's reservation on those parts of the report

contained in document A/61/648 that may be construed as recognition of the Israeli regime.

The President: We have heard the only speaker in explanation of position.

The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of sub-item (b) of agenda item 3.

Agenda item 48 (*continued*)

2001-2010: Decade to Roll Back Malaria in Developing Countries, Particularly in Africa

Draft resolution A/61/L.50

The President: Members will recall that the General Assembly held a joint debate on agenda item 48 and agenda item 62 and its sub-items (a) and (b) at the 28th to 30th plenary meetings, held on 12 and 13 October.

I give the floor to the representative of the Niger to introduce draft resolution A/61/L.50.

Mr. Adamou (Niger): On behalf of the African Group and all of the sponsors, I have the honour to introduce, under agenda item 48, the draft resolution entitled "2001-2010: Decade to Roll Back Malaria in Developing Countries, Particularly in Africa", contained in document A/61/L.50.

The Secretary-General reports that up to 3 billion people in 107 countries and territories are affected by malaria. While most of the burden is on Africa, malaria is a global problem continuing to hinder social and economic development in Asia, Latin America, the Middle East, Europe and the Pacific.

Each year, more than 500 million people suffer from acute malaria, which causes more than 1 million deaths, at least 86 per of which occur in sub-Saharan Africa. Malaria is, however, is a disease that is preventable, treatable and curable. It is thus in an effort to roll back malaria, as well as to implement Millennium Development Goal 6, that the African Union is again this year presenting a draft resolution entitled "2001-2010: Decade to Roll Back Malaria in Developing Countries, Particularly in Africa".

The draft resolution is an update of a similar resolution that was adopted last year. The draft resolution has been updated to take into account new developments and measures to combat malaria, especially those relating to issues concerning vector control, protection and treatment for children and pregnant women, increased access to affordable medicine, increased investment in and efforts aimed at research and development, transfers of technology and private sector contributions.

My delegation would like to thank all of the delegations that participated in negotiations on the draft resolution. Their constructive contributions enabled us to get a text that will provide a framework for action by all stakeholders in the fight to eradicate malaria. We would especially like to thank Joyce Kafanabo of the Permanent Mission of the United Republic of Tanzania for having facilitated the negotiations on the text.

In introducing the draft resolution, my delegation hopes that, as in previous years, it will be adopted by consensus.

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/61/L.50. I should like to announce that, since its introduction, the following countries have become sponsors: Belgium, Brazil, Cape Verde, the Central African Republic, Chile, Denmark, France, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mauritius, Morocco, the Niger, Portugal, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Turkey and Ukraine. May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/61/L.50?

Draft resolution A/61/L.50 was adopted (resolution 61/228)

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 48?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 62 (*continued*)

New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support

(a) New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support

Draft resolution (A/61/L.23/Rev.1)

(b) Causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa

Draft resolution (A/61/L.41/Rev.1)

The President: Members will recall that the General Assembly held a joint debate on agenda item 62 and its sub-items (a) and (b) and agenda item 48 at the 28th to 30th plenary meetings, held on 12 and 13 October.

In connection with draft resolution A/61/L.23/Rev.1, I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Ms. Kelley (Director, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council Affairs Division): In connection with draft resolution A/61/L.23/Rev.1, entitled "New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support", I wish to put on record the following statement of financial implications on behalf of the Secretary-General, in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

By operative paragraphs 28 and 30 of draft resolution A/61/L.23/Rev.1 , the General Assembly would decide

> "to hold within existing resources a high-level meeting on 'Africa's development needs: state of implementation of various commitments, challenges and the way forward' during its sixty-third session",

and would also request the Secretary-General

> "to continue to take measures to strengthen the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa in order to enable it to effectively fulfil its mandate, including monitoring and reporting on progress related to meeting the special needs of Africa".

Pursuant to operative paragraph 28 of the draft resolution, it is understood that the high-level meeting would be held in the context of the regular plenary meetings of the General Assembly. Provision for conference servicing costs for the sixty-third session of the General Assembly will be included in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009. Any additional conference servicing requirements for related activities, such as parallel meetings of the General Assembly, round tables, hearings and/or panels will be reviewed and evaluated later, when the format and modalities of the high-level meeting are determined.

Pursuant to paragraph 30 of the draft resolution, resources amounting to $7,082,000 have been provided under the programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007 for the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa. Related requirements for the next biennium will be considered in the context of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009. Accordingly, the adoption of draft resolution A/61/L.23/Rev.1 would not give rise to any financial implications under the programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007.

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolutions A/61/L.23/Rev.1 and A/61/L.41/Rev.1.

The Assembly will first take a decision on draft resolution A/61/L.23/Rev.1, entitled "New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support". I should like to announce that, since the introduction of the draft resolution, the following countries have become sponsors of draft resolution A/61/L.23/Rev.1: Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Israel, Japan, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Sweden, Ukraine and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/61/L.23/Rev.1?

> *Draft resolution A/61/L.23/Rev.1 was adopted* (resolution 61/229).

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/61/L.41/Rev.1, entitled "Implementation of the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the causes of conflict and promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa". I should like to announce that, since the introduction of the draft resolution, the following countries have become sponsors of draft resolution A/61/L.41/Rev.1: Belgium, Canada, Croatia, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Sweden and Ukraine. May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/61/L.41/Rev.1?

> *Draft resolution A/61/L.41/Rev.1 was adopted* (resolution 61/230).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of

sub-items (a) and (b) of agenda item 62 and of agenda item 62 as a whole?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 113 (*continued*)

Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

Draft decision (A/61/L.52)

The President: The Assembly will now take action on draft decision A/61/L.52, entitled "Mandate review". May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft decision A/61/L.52?

Draft decision A/61/L.52 was adopted.

The President: On the subject of mandate review, members will recall that, during 2006, Ambassador David Cooney of Ireland and Ambassador Munir Akram of Pakistan have been conducting discussions and complex negotiations in the context of the informal consultations. On behalf of the General Assembly, I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere thanks to both of them for their able leadership. I am sure that members of the Assembly join me in extending to them our sincere appreciation.

Ambassador Akram has informed me that, due to other engagements, he will not be able to continue as one of the Co-Chairs. I would therefore like to inform members that I have requested Ambassador Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury of Bangladesh to serve, as of next year, as one of the Co-Chairs of the informal consultations. He has graciously accepted to do so.

I shall now give the floor to representatives who wish to explain their positions on the decision just adopted.

Mr. Afifi (Egypt): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the members of the joint group of the Non-Aligned Movement and the Group of 77 and China. This statement pertains to the adoption of the draft decision entitled "Mandate review".

Allow me, at the outset, on behalf of the members of the joint group of the Non-Aligned Movement and the Group of 77 and China, to express our gratitude for the tireless and successful efforts you are exerting, Madam President, to facilitate the work of the General Assembly at its sixty-first session.

In the context of our decision today relating to extending the process of mandate review to the end of the Assembly's current session, the joint group would like to reiterate its firm position, which it has held since the beginning of the process. We believe that mandate review is a unique opportunity to strengthen the United Nations and to increase its effectiveness. In that context, the members of the group expressed their willingness to become engaged in the process of reviewing mandates older than five years and not renewed, in order to address some of the waste and redundancy that permeate the United Nations system.

After concluding this phase, during which the group played a leading and constructive role, the group agreed to become engaged in the second phase of the process, which is to renew mandates older than five years but which have been renewed, in a spirit of flexibility and responsibility with a view to realizing the aims and objectives of the Organization.

However, the members of the group affirmed, in the context of the informal plenary meeting held on 24 November 2006, that their engagement in this phase of the process will be governed by certain guidelines; this which was not contested by any of the other groups or Member States. Those guidelines, which will still govern the engagement of the group of the process until the end of the sixty-first session, are as follows.

First, the exercise shall be undertaken in a transparent, open and all-inclusive manner that respects the equality of Member States, as enshrined in the Charter. Second, the objective of the exercise is to strengthen the programme of work of the Organization, including through providing additional financial and human resources if required. Third, the mandate review is not a cost-cutting exercise and does not aim at reducing the budget levels of the Organization. Fourth, all decisions pertaining to this exercise shall be based primarily on the principle of consensus, without prejudice to the rules of procedure of the General Assembly concerning decision-making. Fifth, politically sensitive mandates — which include mandates in the areas of the maintenance of international peace and security, development and other categories — fall outside the scope of this exercise, and no mandate shall be discontinued except with the consent of parties concerned.

Sixth, the scope of the exercise is limited to mandates older than five years at the date of the

adoption of the World Summit Outcome, in September 2005. Seventh, any resources that might be freed up from the review of mandates shall be redirected to the same issue area, unless otherwise agreed by Member States. Eighth, the informal working group at the expert level shall be the appropriate mechanism to undertake the substantive review of mandates, and it shall submit a report to the informal working group of the plenary. In undertaking this task, the expert-level working group shall entrust the Main Committees of the Assembly with a substantive review of mandates that fall within the respective purview of each Main Committee.

Ninth, mandate review exercise shall conclude by the end of 2006, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the World Summit Outcome, unless otherwise decided by the General Assembly, as is the case today. Finally, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council are invited to follow the same principles I have referred to in their respective reviews of mandates.

The joint group of the Non-Aligned Movement and the Group of 77 and China is willing to continue to work actively and constructively in the context of the process of mandate review, as long as there is a common understanding that this will take into consideration the interests and concerns of all Member States and as long as the final aim is to strengthen the effectiveness of the Organization and increase its ability to address the challenges it faces, rather than trying to reduce its expenditures and reduce the level of its budget.

The group would like this statement to be circulated as an official document of the General Assembly.

Mr. Mukai (Japan): Japan welcomes the decision to continue the mandate review process during the sixty-first session of the General Assembly. We would therefore like to thank Ms. Haya Rashed Al-Khalifa, President of the General Assembly, as well as her Office, the Secretariat and the Co-Chairs — Ambassador Munir Akram of Pakistan and Ambassador David Cooney of Ireland — and their respective delegations, as well as other delegations, for their efforts to move the process further along.

My delegation is ready to work together with you, Madam President, and with the Co-Chairs for next year — Ambassador Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury of Bangladesh and Ambassador David Cooney of Ireland — as well as with other delegations on this exercise next year, based on the progress report made by the Co-Chairs of the informal plenary of the General Assembly on mandate review in their letter dated 19 December 2006.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude this stage of its consideration of agenda item 113?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 37 (*continued*)

Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations

Report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) (A/61/413)

The President: Members will recall that, at its 79th plenary meeting, held on 14 December 2006, the Assembly postponed its consideration of the draft resolution recommended by the Special Political and Decolonization Committee in paragraph 8 of its report, in order to allow time to consider an proposed oral amendments.

I now give the floor to the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to introduce an amendment to the draft resolution recommended by the Fourth Committee in its report.

Mr. Ja'afari (Syria): The members of the Special Committee on decolonization have held consultations with the European Union (EU) on the proposed EU amendments to paragraphs 12 and 13 of the draft resolution on the implementation of the Decolonization Declaration by the specialized agencies, contained in paragraph 8 of the Committee's report contained in document A/61/413.

In that connection, we have reached agreement on amended language. Accordingly, paragraph 12 would now read as follows:

> "Welcomes the adoption by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) of its resolution 574 (XXVII) of 16 May 1998 calling for the creation of mechanisms for the Non-Self-Governing

Territories that are associate members of the Commission to participate in the special sessions of the General Assembly, subject to the rules of procedure of the Assembly, to review and assess the implementation of the plans of action of those United Nations world conferences in which the Territories originally participated in the capacity of observer, and in the work of the Economic and Social Council and its subsidiary bodies, and takes note of ECLAC resolution 598 (XXX) of 2 July 2004 on the issue".

Operative paragraph 13 will remain as originally adopted by the Fourth Committee.

Accordingly, I would like to introduce that agreed change to the text as an amendment, with the understanding that the oral amendment proposed at the 79th meeting is no longer necessary.

The President: The representative of the Syrian Arab Republic has introduced an oral amendment to the draft resolution contained in paragraph 8 of the report (A/61/413) of the Fourth Committee. In accordance with rule 90 of the rules of procedure, the Assembly shall first take a decision on the oral amendment submitted by the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt the oral amendment submitted by the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic?

The oral amendment was adopted.

The President: Since the oral amendment to the draft resolution has been adopted, we shall now proceed to take a decision on the draft resolution contained in paragraph 8 of the report of the Fourth Committee contained in document A/61/413, as orally amended. A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Australia, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Dominica, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritius, Mexico, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Palau, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Qatar, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

United States of America

Abstaining:

Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Micronesia (Federated States of), Moldova, Monaco, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

The draft resolution, as orally amended, was adopted by 100 votes to 1, with 52 abstentions (resolution 61/231).

[Subsequently, the delegations of the Dominican Republic, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mauritania, the Philippines and Togo advised the Secretariat that they had intended to vote in favour.]

The President: I shall now give the floor to those representatives who wish to speak in explanation of vote on the resolution just adopted.

Ms. Brazier (United Kingdom): The United Kingdom welcomes the participation of associate members of the Economic Commission for Latin

America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) in the relevant meetings of the United Nations. Indeed, United Kingdom delegations to a number of recent meetings, including those of the Beijing Plus Ten review and the Commission on Sustainable Development, have included representatives from ECLAC associate members. However, the United Kingdom believes that the participation of ECLAC associate members should be through the official delegations of United Nations Member States, rather than as separate entities. The United Kingdom continues to interpret ECLAC resolution 574 (XXVII) in that way.

Mr. Miller (United States of America): The United States voted against resolution 61/231. We agree in principle that United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies can usefully provide support to territories that are not United Nations Members, so long as the domestic laws and policies of a territory's administering Power allows such United Nations support.

However, the United States considers that it is inappropriate to link the work of specialized agencies to the Declaration or to the issue of colonial peoples. The United States objects in particular to provisions in the resolution that make recommendations with respect to the participation of territories in the activities and bodies of the United Nations. It is the responsibility of the administering Power, not the General Assembly or the Economic and Social Council, to decide the nature, if any, of its territory's participation.

Under the United States Constitution, the federal Government has the sole responsibility for the conduct of United States foreign relations, and that includes foreign relations that relate to United States territories. These arrangements have been accepted by such territories.

For the United States, the very term "non-self-governing" seems inappropriate for territories able to establish their own constitution, elect their own public officers, have representation in Washington, D.C., and choose their own economic path. The United States was fully supportive when countries chose independence, and was proud to welcome them as equal and sovereign partners. In the case of territories that did not choose independence, however, the United States has also supported the right of people in those territories to a full measure of self-government, including the rights to integration and free association. The United States calls upon all Member States to respect the choices made by residents of non-self-governing territories.

Finally, the United States would like to point out that by including paragraph 13, the sponsors of the resolution ignored decisions made by the Economic and Social Council, a principal organ of the United Nations, and its subsidiary body, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, since those United Nations bodies declined to adopt the resolution noted in that paragraph, for many of the reasons we have already mentioned.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 37?

It was so decided.

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded its consideration of all the reports of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) before it.

The Assembly will take up the remaining reports of the Third Committee, on agenda items 67 (c) and 68, as well as the reports of the Fifth Committee, as soon as the Fifth Committee has concluded its work. I propose therefore to suspend the meeting.

The meeting was suspended at 4.35 p.m. and resumed at 10.10 p.m.

The President: The General Assembly will now take up the remaining reports of the Third Committee on sub-item (c) of agenda item 67 and agenda item 68. Thereafter, it will take up the reports of the Fifth Committee on agenda items 115; 116 together with 117; 118; 120; 121; 122; 124; 125; 126; 129; 130; 131; 47 together with 113, 116, 117, 122, 123, 132, 147 and 149; 47 together with 113, 116, 117, 122, 123, 132 and 149; 134; 139; 151; 144 (b); 117; and 116.

As there is no proposal under rule 66 of the rules of procedure, I shall take it that the General Assembly decides not to discuss these two Committee reports which are before the Assembly today.

It was so decided.

The President: Statements will therefore be limited to explanations of vote. The positions of delegations regarding the recommendations of these

Committees have been made clear in the Committees and are reflected in their relevant official records.

May I remind members that under paragraph 7 of decision 34/401, the General Assembly agreed that

> "When the same draft resolution is considered in a Main Committee and in plenary meeting, a delegation should, as far as possible, explain its vote only once, i.e., either in the Committee or in plenary meeting unless that delegation's vote is different from its vote in the Committee".

May I also remind delegations that, in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Before we begin to take action on the recommendations contained in the reports of the Third Committee and the Fifth Committee, I should like to advise representatives that we are going to proceed to take decisions in the same manner as was done in the Committees, unless notified otherwise in advance. That means that where separate or recorded votes were taken, we will do the same. I hope that we may proceed to adopt without a vote those recommendations that were adopted without a vote in their respective Committees.

Agenda item 67 (*continued*)

Promotion and protection of human rights

(c) Human rights situations and reports of special rapporteurs and representatives

Report of the Third Committee (A/61/443/Add.3)

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/61/666)

The President: We shall now proceed to take action on draft resolution II recommended by the Third Committee in paragraph 70 of its report. Draft resolution II is entitled "Situation of human rights in Myanmar". The report of the Fifth Committee on the programme budget implications of the draft resolution has been issued as document A/61/666, in English only.

I now give the floor to the representative of Finland.

Mrs. Pohjankukka (Finland): I wish to notify the Secretariat of a technical correction that needs to be made to a change made by the editors. This correction is needed in order to bring draft resolution II as presented in the Third Committee report in document A/61/443/Add.3 into line with the text adopted by the Committee on the situation of human rights in Myanmar (A/C.3/61/L.38/Rev.1). In operative paragraph 2 (a), immediately after "ethnic nationalities of Myanmar", instead of "in particular" it should read "including". Therefore, operative paragraph 2 (a) should read as originally adopted by the Third Committee in A/C.3/61/L.38/Rev.1, as follows:

> "The ongoing systematic violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms of the people of Myanmar, as described in resolution 60/233 and previous resolutions of the General Assembly and the Commission on Human Rights, as well as the reports of the Special Rapporteur and of the International Labour Organization, including discrimination and violations suffered by persons belonging to ethnic nationalities of Myanmar, including extrajudicial killings, rape and other forms of sexual violence ...".

The remainder of the paragraph is as it appears in the report.

The President: I give the floor to the representative of Myanmar.

Mr. Swe (Myanmar): I would like to thank the representative of the European Union for reading out this technical amendment, but I would like to be sure that the text is the same as the one that was adopted by the Third Committee. Therefore, I would like to request the Secretariat to check and verify that that is indeed the case.

The President: We have taken note of the request of the representative of Myanmar.

We shall now take a decision on draft resolution II, as orally corrected. A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Belgium, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burundi, Canada, Chile, Congo, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador,

Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Latvia, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Moldova, Monaco, Morocco, Nauru, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Palau, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay

Against:

Algeria, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belarus, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, China, Cuba, Egypt, Guinea, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Lao People's Democratic Republic, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Myanmar, Pakistan, Russian Federation, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Zimbabwe

Abstaining:

Antigua and Barbuda, Bahrain, Barbados, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Colombia, Comoros, Costa Rica, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Fiji, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Niger, Philippines, Qatar, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Swaziland, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, United Arab Emirates, Yemen, Zambia

Draft resolution II, as orally corrected, was adopted by 82 votes to 25, with 45 abstentions (resolution 61/232).

[Subsequently, the delegation of the Congo advised the Secretariat that it had intended to vote against, and the delegations of Angola, Eritrea and Kuwait advised the Secretariat that they had intended to abstain.]

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (c) of agenda item 67 and of agenda item 67 as a whole?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 68 (*continued*)

Report of the Human Rights Council

Report of the Third Committee (A/61/448 and Corr.2)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft decision recommended by the Third Committee in paragraph 29 of its report. The draft decision is entitled "Report of the Human Rights Council". We shall now take action on the draft decision. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt the draft decision recommended by the Third Committee?

The draft decision was adopted.

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 68.

The General Assembly has thus concluded its consideration of all the reports of the Third Committee.

Reports of the Fifth Committee

The President: The General Assembly will now consider the reports of the Fifth Committee on agenda items 115; 116 and 117; 118; 120; 121; 122; 124; 125; 126; 129; 130; 131; 47 together with 113, 116, 117, 122, 123, 132, 147 and 149; 47 together with 113, 116, 127, 122, 123, 132 and 149; 134; 139; 151; 144 (b); 117 and 116.

I request Mr. Diego Simancas of Mexico, Rapporteur of the Fifth Committee, to introduce in one intervention the reports of the Fifth Committee that are before the Assembly.

Mr. Simancas (Mexico), Rapporteur of the Fifth Committee (*spoke in Spanish*): This evening, I have the honour to present to the General Assembly the reports of the Fifth Committee containing recommendations on issues that require the adoption of measures during the main part of the Assembly's sixty-first session.

The Fifth Committee met from 29 September to 22 December 2006 and held 37 plenary meetings, more than 60 informal consultations and numerous "informal informals". The Committee held extensive consultations

on the issues before it and adopted all of its recommendations without a vote, except for those related to the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon and to a number of programme budget implications. Therefore, I have the honour to present the following brief report on the work of the Fifth Committee.

Agenda item 115 is entitled "Financial reports and audited financial statements, and reports of the Board of Auditors". The report of the Committee on that item is contained in document A/61/631, in paragraph 7 which the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution, which the Committee adopted without a vote.

Under agenda item 116, entitled "Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations", and agenda item 117, entitled "Programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007", the Committee recommends to the Assembly, in paragraph 7 of its report (A/61/652), the adoption of a draft resolution on enhancing the role of the subregional offices of the Economic Commission for Africa. The Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote.

Under agenda item 118, entitled "Programme planning", the Committee recommends to the Assembly, in paragraph 8 of its report (A/61/653), the adoption of a draft resolution on programme planning, which the Committee adopted without a vote.

Under agenda item 120, entitled "Administrative and budgetary coordination of the United Nations with the specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency", the Committee recommends to the Assembly, in paragraph 6 of its report (A/61/632), the adoption of a draft decision, which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

Under agenda item 121, entitled "Pattern of conferences," the Committee recommends to the Assembly, in paragraph 7 of its report (A/61/597), the adoption of a draft resolution, which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

Agenda item 122 is entitled "Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations". The report of the Fifth Committee on that item is contained in document A/61/512/Add.1. In paragraph 6 of its report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution, which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

Agenda item 124 is entitled "Joint Inspection Unit". The report of the Committee on that item is contained in document A/61/654. The draft resolution recommended in paragraph 6 of the report was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

Under agenda item 125, entitled "United Nations common system", the Committee recommends to the Assembly, in paragraph 8 of its report (A/61/663), the adoption of a draft resolution, which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

Agenda item 126 is entitled "United Nations pension system". The report of the Fifth Committee on that item is contained in document A/61/664. The draft resolution recommended in paragraph 9 of the report was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

Agenda item 129 is entitled "Financing of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Genocide and Other Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of Rwanda and Rwandan Citizens Responsible for Genocide and Other Such Violations Committed in the Territory of Neighbouring States between 1 January and 31 December 1994". The report of the Committee on that item is contained in document A/61/655. In paragraph 6 of the report, the Committee recommends to the Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution, which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

Agenda item 130 is entitled "Financing of the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991". The report of the Committee on that item is contained in document A/61/656. In paragraph 6 of the report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution, which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

Agenda item 131 is entitled "Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of United Nations peacekeeping operations". The report of the Committee on that item is contained in A/61/665. In paragraph 6 of the report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a

draft resolution, which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

With regard to agenda items 47, 113, 116, 117, 122, 123, 132, 147 and 149, concerning human resources management, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly, in paragraph 6 of its report (A/61/659), the adoption of a draft resolution, which the Committee adopted without a vote.

On agenda items 47, 113, 116, 117, 122, 123, 132 and 149, concerning the comprehensive review of governance and oversight within the United Nations and its funds, programmes and specialized agencies, the Committee recommends, in paragraph 8 of its report (A/61/658), the adoption of draft resolution I, on governance and oversight, and draft resolution II, on procurement reform. Both were adopted by the Committee without a vote.

With regard to the draft proposals on the financing of peacekeeping operations, I should like to inform the General Assembly that, with the exception of the proposal under agenda item 144 (b), entitled "Financing of the United Nations peacekeeping forces in the Middle East: United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon", all the draft proposals were adopted by the Committee without a vote.

Reports of the Fifth Committee are presented under the following agenda items: 134, entitled "Financing of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire" (A/61/621); 139, entitled "Financing of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea" (A/61/617); and 151, entitled "Financing of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste" (A/61/644).

The report of the Fifth Committee under agenda item 144 (b), entitled "Financing of the United Nations peacekeeping forces in the Middle East: United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon", is contained in document A/61/657. In considering the draft resolution recommended in that report, the Committee decided to retain the fourth preambular paragraph and operative paragraphs 4, 5 and 21 in a single recorded vote of 93 in favour, 6 against and 47 abstentions. In paragraph 9 of the report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the draft resolution as a whole, which the Committee adopted by a recorded vote of 142 in favour and 4 against, with 1 abstention.

With regard to agenda item 117, entitled "Programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007", in paragraph 6 of its report in document A/61/592/Add.1, the Committee recommends to the Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution on the capital master plan, which the Committee adopted without a vote. In paragraph 37 of its report in document A/61/592/Add.2, the Committee recommends the adoption of two draft resolutions and two draft decisions.

Draft resolution I concerns the questions relating to the programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007, and draft resolution II relates to the revised budget appropriations for the biennium 2006-2007, the revised income estimates for the biennium 2006-2007 and the financing of the appropriations for the year 2007. Draft decision I deals with the United Nations Fund for International Partnerships, and draft decision II deals with the programme budget implications of recommendations contained in draft resolution A/C.5/61/L.15. All draft proposals were adopted by the Committee without a vote.

Regarding agenda item 116, entitled "Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations," the Committee recommends to the Assembly in paragraph 8 of its report (A/61/667) the adoption of a draft resolution on the proposed programme budget outline for 2008-2009. Also, in paragraph 9 of the same report, the Committee recommends the adoption of a draft decision relating to questions deferred to a later date. The Committee adopted both proposals without a vote.

Agenda item 115

Financial reports and audited financial statements, and report of the Board of Auditors

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/61/631)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 7 of its report. We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 61/233).

The President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 115.

Agenda items 116 and 117

Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations

Programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/61/652)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 7 of its report. We will now take a decision on the draft resolution, entitled "Enhancing the role of the subregional offices of the Economic Commission for Africa". The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 61/234).

The President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda items 116 and 117.

Agenda item 118

Programme planning

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/61/653)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 8 of its report. We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 61/235).

The President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 118.

Agenda item 120

Administrative and budgetary coordination of the United Nations with the specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/61/632)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft decision recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report. We will now take action on the draft decision, entitled "Budgetary and financial situation of the organizations of the United Nations system". The Fifth Committee adopted the draft decision without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft decision was adopted.

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 120.

Agenda item 121

Pattern of conferences

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/61/597)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 7 of its report. We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 61/236).

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 121.

Agenda item 122 (*continued*)

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/61/512/Add.1)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report. The text of the draft resolution is, for the time being, contained in document A/C.5/61/L.38. We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 61/237).

The President: I shall now give the floor to those representatives who wish to speak in explanation of position on the resolution just adopted.

Mr. Grönberg (Finland): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union.

The European Union is a staunch supporter of the United Nations and the ideals and principles it stands for. The European Union also supports the consensus principle, which is fundamental for our decisions on budgetary matters in the Fifth Committee. It is with that in mind that the European Union joined the consensus on the scale of assessments.

At the same time, however, it should be clear to all that the European Union proposed changes to the methodology. In our opinion, there are better, fairer and more balanced ways to share the budgetary responsibilities of the United Nations among all Member States. The status quo is not sustainable in the long term.

We went into the negotiations with an open mind, looking forward to a debate. We recognize that we were not able to convince others to take our concerns into account. With this in mind, the General Assembly has now requested the Committee on Contributions to review the matter and to present us with alternatives for the methodology, reflecting capacity to pay.

As the role of the United Nations in the world has been growing in recent years, the budget of the United Nations has likewise increased and seems likely to continue to do so. The European Union, as the largest contributor of resources, has great interest in ensuring that resources are spent in an efficient, effective and transparent way. In this regard, we will continue to fully support efforts by the Secretary-General to improve the functioning of the Organization.

The growing budget also makes the United Nations more dependent on timely payment of contributions. The European Union has consistently shown its responsibility in this regard, and we once again appeal to all Member States to do the same: to pay in full, on time and without conditions.

We wish to extend our thanks to all of our partners. While sometimes adversaries in negotiations, we all share a concern for the future of this planet. By achieving agreement today, we have made it possible for this one global body — a body that we, as the European Union, consider so special and important — to continue operating. For that we are grateful, and we would like to wish all delegations all the best for the holiday season.

Ms. Lock (South Africa): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on agenda item 122, entitled "Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations".

By adopting resolution 61/237, on the scale of assessments for the period 2007 to 2009, the Assembly has reaffirmed that the principle of capacity to pay remains the fundamental criterion in determining how the expenses of the Organization should be apportioned among its Member States. The Group of 77 and China joins this consensus and remains ready to ensure that the Organization receives adequate and predictable financing in order to successfully implement the numerous mandates that Member States have bestowed upon it. The final outcome does not reflect some of the concerns of developing countries, but we believe that it is a good outcome for the Organization.

The Group of 77 and China wishes to thank the coordinator, Mr. Seyed Morteza Mirmohammad, for the manner in which he guided the members of the Fifth Committee during the negotiations. We furthermore wish to thank our negotiating partners for the constructive manner in which the negotiations were conducted. The Group also appreciates the invaluable assistance that the Fifth Committee received from the Chairman of the Committee on Contributions and the Secretariat.

The negotiations on the scale of assessments are traditionally challenging, and Member States were at times faced with very difficult decisions. The Group of 77 and China, however, is encouraged that the negotiations were transparent and conducted in a spirit of compromise, and that all the negotiating groups and delegations showed good faith throughout. That enabled the Committee to arrive at a consensus decision. We also appreciate the invaluable support provided by you, Madam President, and your Office during the negotiations.

Turning to the resolution, the Group of 77 and China welcomes the reaffirmation in the resolution that the determination of the scale of assessments shall remain the prerogative of the General Assembly. The resolution further reaffirms that the Committee on Contributions is a technical body and that, in its consideration of the elements of future methodologies, it should be guided by relevant General Assembly resolutions and the rules of procedure of the General Assembly. We also welcome the reaffirmation that the scale of assessments should continue to reflect the fundamental principle of capacity to pay. To this end,

we wish to state our position on a number of fundamental principles relating to the elements of the methodology of the scale of assessments.

First, the Group of 77 and China holds the view that the main element affecting and distorting the application of the principle of capacity to pay is the ceiling. That is contrary to the intention of the General Assembly when it agreed to set a maximum assessment rate for the main contributor: that the application of the ceiling should not distort the principle of capacity to pay. It also places an unfair burden on the rest of the membership.

It will be recalled that, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 55/5 C, the rationale for reducing the ceiling to 22 per cent was to facilitate the payment of contributions and arrears by the main contributor and thereby improve the financial situation of the United Nations. The consensus decision in 2000 was based on the understanding that the rationale for requesting the reduction would be honoured. The Group of 77 and China believes that the compact arrived at in 2000 remains to be honoured by the main contributor and that it thus would be incumbent upon the General Assembly to continue to undertake the review decided on in paragraph 2 of its resolution 55/5 C. Despite our opposition to unilateral attempts to artificially reduce the ceiling, the Group of 77 and China, in 2000, and once again now in 2006, joined the consensus for the sake of the financial well-being of the Organization.

Secondly, the Group of 77 and China wishes to emphasize that the low per capita income adjustment is an integral part of the scale methodology used by the Organization since its creation in 1948. We strongly support maintaining it as a fundamental element of the methodology and will continue to oppose any attempts to undermine the principle and application of this adjustment. The General Assembly from the beginning has recognized that the comparative income per head of population should be taken into account in order to prevent anomalous assessments resulting from the use of comparative estimates of national income. Therefore, the Group opposed attempts to introduce a multiple gradient thereby applying a different criterion to some developing countries by ignoring the impact that large populations place on the capacity of developing countries to pay. We will continue to oppose attempts to shift the burden resulting from the reduction of the ceiling to developing countries. The proposal for a multiple gradient was not fair and undermined the principle of capacity to pay.

Thirdly, the Group of 77 and China maintains the position that the debt burden adjustment reflects an important factor in the capacity to pay of Member States and should be maintained as an integral element of the scale methodology based on the debt stock approach. We were concerned by the attempts of developed countries in this negotiation to eliminate the debt burden adjustment. We wish to place on record that we will not support any attempts to undermine or change this crucial element of the methodology.

The Group of 77 and China was concerned that, once again, a number of Member States faced substantial increases in their rates of assessment. We consequently submitted a concrete proposal for a phasing-in mechanism that was aimed at finding a technical solution to this recurring and endemic problem. Whilst we appreciate the positive response that our proposal received from some delegations, it is regrettable that it was not included in the final consensus outcome.

This difficulty was finally resolved through the redistribution of points received from the Russian Federation and mitigation provided by other developing countries in the Group of 77 and China. We appreciate the gesture by the Russian Federation and by other developing countries to assist in mitigation.

However, the Group expects that the Committee on Contributions will focus on this question and make proposals to address such increases through a phasing-in mechanism in order not to impose an excessive burden on Member States, particularly developing countries, facing large increases in their rates of assessment.

As we are nearing the end of this session, I have the honour to convey to you, Madam President, the gratitude of the Group of 77 and China for your guidance and able leadership. You have steered us through very difficult times and instilled a sense of transparency in our deliberations. We also wish to pay tribute to the States members of the Group of 77 and China for their unity and support to South Africa during our chairmanship. In the face of attempts to divide developing countries, we were heartened by the solidarity and commitment of the Group to this Organization.

Ms. Roth (Liechtenstein): Under the terms of the new scale of assessments, Liechtenstein's contribution to the United Nations budget will increase by 66 per cent, attaining a rate of assessment of 0.01 per cent. This rate had already been apportioned to Liechtenstein before the year 2000. In 2000, the then-new machine scale triggered a decrease in Liechtenstein's rates of assessment for the following years. Although Liechtenstein considered this rate as not accurately reflecting its capacity to pay, we accepted the new scale but at the same time reaffirmed our expectation to be assessed at a higher percentage. Since then, Liechtenstein has been paying the difference between the former rate of 0.01 per cent and the subsequent rates of 0.005 and 0.006 per cent in the form of voluntary contributions to various United nations entities and activities, focusing on programmes funded from voluntary contributions that we believe should be funded from the regular budget.

We are pleased to see that for the period 2007-2009, Liechtenstein's rate has attained the level we have always considered to be appropriate. The reason for this increase does not lie in the methodology used, but in the availability of previously unavailable official figures, which replaced the formerly used United Nations Statistics Division estimates. Given this situation, Liechtenstein will cease to make the aforementioned kind of additional contributions. However, Liechtenstein will continue to make other kinds of voluntary contributions.

Mr. Simancas (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation joined the consensus with respect to continuing to use the current methodology for setting the scale of assessments, owing to Mexico's commitment to ensuring that the work of the United Nations continues to move forward.

As members know, Mexico proposed a methodology for determining the scale of assessments for States Members of the Organization. Given the shortcomings that continue to exist in the current system, my country hopes that, in the future, Mexico's proposal will be taken into consideration. Among other advantages, that formula would offset distortions that primarily affect developing countries, because it takes into account the differences that exist in the national income levels of Member States, within the parameters that the membership has agreed upon.

In the broader context of our discussions, we have repeatedly asked that the United Nations be brought up to date and that it reflect the realities of today's world. This needs to apply also to the issue of the scale of assessment. Contributions need to be an accurate reflection of the involvement of each Member State in the global context.

With the approval of the scale of assessments for the three-year period 2007-2009, Mexico has consolidated its position as the tenth largest contributor worldwide. In addition, Mexico's assessment is the largest in Latin America and the Caribbean: our assessment is more than half of the total contribution from our region.

We believe it relevant to point that out in order to underscore my country's great interest in ensuring that the programmes of the United Nations system conform to clearly defined priorities and to evident and clear functionality in terms of its tasks, with transparency in the use of financial resources, and that proposals with an impact on the budget of the Organization be formulated with due thoroughness and responsibility.

The President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 122.

Agenda item 124

Joint Inspection Unit

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/61/654)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report. We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 61/238).

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 124.

Agenda item 125

United Nations common system

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/61/663)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee

in paragraph 8 of its report. The text of the draft resolution, for the time being, is contained in document A/C.5/61/L.27. We will now take a decision on the draft resolution, entitled "United Nations common system: report of the International Civil Service Commission". The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 61/239).

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 125.

Agenda item 126

United Nations pension system

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/61/664)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 9 of its report. The text of the draft resolution, for the time being, is contained in document A/C.5/61/L.29. We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 61/240).

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 126.

Agenda item 129

Financing of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Genocide and Other Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of Rwanda and Rwandan Citizens Responsible for Genocide and Other Such Violations Committed in the Territory of Neighbouring States between 1 January and 31 December 1994

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/61/655)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report. We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 61/241).

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 129.

Agenda item 130

Financing of the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/61/656)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report. We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 61/242).

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 130.

Agenda item 131

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of United Nations peacekeeping operations

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/61/665)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report. The text of the draft resolution, for the time being, is contained in document A/C.5/61/L.26. The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution, which was adopted by the Fifth Committee without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly too wishes to adopt it?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 61/243).

The President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 131.

Agenda items 47 (*continued*), 113 (*continued*), 116, 117 (*continued*), 122 (*continued*), 123, 132, 147 and 149 (*continued*)

Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields

Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations

Programmed budget for the biennium 2006-2007

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations

Human resources management

Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations

Financing of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara

United Nations reform: measures and proposals

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/61/659)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report. The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution, entitled "Human resources management". The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 61/244).

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Russian Federation, who wishes to speak in explanation of position on the resolution just adopted.

Mr. Kovalenko (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian delegation would like to state the following with regard to the General Assembly's adoption of resolution 61/244, entitled "Human resources management".

We believe that the General Assembly has been able to agree on a generally balanced resolution that takes a constructive approach to reform in the area of human resources, thereby contributing to strengthening the management system at the United Nations in general. However, we would like to express our disappointment that the resolution does not include provisions on issues related to cases of waiving immunity for United Nations officials other than Secretariat staff. We would like to confirm that the Russian delegation believes that in cases that have arisen with regard to waiving immunity for that category of officials, the Secretary-General disregarded procedures established by resolution 56/280, which set forth a mechanism for consultations between the Secretary-General and the General Assembly on issues related to waiving immunity for elected officials.

We are also very surprised that certain delegations have prevented the Assembly from receiving information from the Secretary-General on issues related to waiving immunity for elected United Nations officials. We believe that such an approach sets a negative precedent for the Assembly's future work. The effectiveness of its work, including on issues relating to management and organization, depends greatly on the ability of delegations to receive full information about the work of the Secretariat and about its compliance with established procedures. That information is necessary for Member States to take well-considered decisions. We are certain that proposals of delegations need to be considered conscientiously.

We also believe that it is incorrect to prevent the General Assembly from considering issues that fall within its purview on the pretext that doing so may have an impact on the work of judiciary bodies of Member States. Such an approach could greatly complicate the decision-making process in the General Assembly and set a negative precedent for the future.

We anticipate that the Secretary-General will shed full light on issues pertaining to immunity in his report on the application of the regulations governing the status, basic rights and duties of officials other than Secretariat officials, which the General Assembly has once again requested.

We would like to note that we will continue to raise issues relating to immunity for elected United Nations officials in the future, as well as to discuss those matters in the General Assembly.

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda items 47, 113, 116, 117, 122, 123, 132, 147 and 149.

Agenda items 47, 113, 116, 117, 122, 123, 132 and 149 ***(continued)***

Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields

Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations

Programmed budget for the biennium 2006-2007

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations

Human resources management

Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations

United Nations reform: measures and proposals

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/61/658)

The President: The Assembly has before it two draft resolutions recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 8 of its report. We will now take a decision on the two draft resolutions.

Draft resolution I is entitled "Comprehensive review of governance and oversight within the United Nations and its funds, programmes and specialized agencies". The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution I was adopted (resolution 61/245).

The President: Draft resolution II is entitled "Procurement reform". The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution II was adopted (resolution 61/246).

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda items 47, 113, 116, 117, 122, 123, 132 and 149.

Agenda item 134

Financing of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/61/621)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report. The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted it witnout a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 61/247).

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda 134.

Agenda item 139

Financing of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/61/617)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report. We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 61/248).

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda 139.

Agenda item 151

Financing of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/61/644)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 9 of its report. We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 61/249).

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda 151.

Agenda item 144

Financing of the United Nations Peacekeeping forces in the Middle East

(b) United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/61/657)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 9 of its report (A/61/657). We will now take a decision on the draft resolution, entitled "Financing of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon". A single, separate vote has been requested on the fourth preambular paragraph and on operative paragraphs 4, 5 and 21 of the draft resolution. As I hear no objection, I shall now put to the vote the fourth preambular paragraph and operative paragraphs 4, 5 and 21. A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Cuba, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

Australia, Canada, Israel, Palau, United States of America

Abstaining:

Albania, Andorra, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Malta, Moldova, Monaco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Panama, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay

The fourth preambular paragraph and operative paragraphs 4, 5 and 21 were retained by 95 votes to 5, with 46 abstentions.

The President: I shall now put to the vote the draft resolution as a whole. A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Canada, Cape Verde, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Moldova, Monaco, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation,

Saint Lucia, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

Israel, Palau, United States of America

Abstaining:

Australia

The draft resolution was adopted by 145 votes to 3, with 1 abstention (resolution 61/250).

The President: I call on the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic, who wishes to speak in explanation of the resolution just adopted.

Mr. Elji (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation voted in favour of resolution 61/250 on the financing of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon on the basis of a principle that my delegation has always stressed, namely, that the responsibility for financing the Force must be borne by Israel, the aggressor party whose actions led to the Force's creation and the occupying Power, as identified in resolution 1874 (S-IV) of 1963.

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of sub-item (b) of agenda item 144.

Agenda item 117

Programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007

Reports of the Fifth Committee (A/61/592/Add.1 and A/61/592/Add.2)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report (A/61/592/Add.1). We will now take a decision on the draft resolution, entitled "Capital master plan". The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 61/251).

The President: The Assembly has before it two draft resolutions and two draft decisions recommended by the Fifth Committee in its report (A/61/592/Add.2), the texts of which, for the time being, are contained in documents A/C.5/61/L.25 and A/C.5/61/L.30, respectively.

Draft resolution I is entitled "Questions relating to the programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007". The Fifth Committee adopted draft resolution I without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution I was adopted (resolution 61/252).

The President: Draft resolution II is entitled "Programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007". The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution II was adopted (resolution 61/253).

The President: Draft decision I is entitled "United Nations Fund for International Partnerships". The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft decision I was adopted.

The President: Draft decision II is entitled "Comprehensive review of governance and oversight within the United Nations and its funds, programmes and specialized agencies". The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft decision II was adopted.

The President: I shall now call on those representatives who wish to speak in explanation of position on the resolutions or decisions just adopted.

Mr. Elji (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation wishes to explain its position on resolution 61/252, just adopted, and particularly on part VII thereof.

At the outset, I should like to express my delegation's support for the General Assembly's adoption of the resolution to finance special political missions, promoting the United Nations role in the

good offices missions provided for in the Charter. We also express our satisfaction at the General Assembly's recognition of the concerns that my delegation voiced in its statement before the Fifth Committee on 18 December during the discussion of agenda item 117, entitled "Programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007", on the mandate of the Secretary-General's Special Envoy for the Implementation of Security Council Resolution 1559 (2004) in the logical framework of the budget. At that time, my delegation expressed concerns and reservations concerning the logical framework of the budget of the Secretary-General's Special Envoy for several reasons.

First, the logical framework for the mission, which was not endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution, expands the mandate of the Special Envoy for the Implementation of Security Council Resolution 1559 (2004) to include some of the requests set out in Security Council resolution 1701 (2006). Such an expansion of mandates would lead not only to the duplication of work in the Secretariat, as there is another Special Envoy of the Secretary-General concerned with the implementation of resolution 1701 (2006), but also to interpreting resolution 1701 (2006) outside its context and substance and to an end other than that for which it was adopted, which is to end Israeli aggression against Lebanon.

Secondly, the logical framework set out for some indicators of achievement exceeds the role of the Secretariat in good offices, contrary to the commitments provided for in the United Nations Charter, particularly paragraph 7 of Article 2 prohibiting any intervention by the United Nations in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any State. The issues of diplomatic relations and the delineation of borders between any two countries are related to national sovereignty and fall outside the framework of resolution 1559 (2004) and of the mandate of the Secretary-General's Special Envoy.

Thirdly, it is difficult to understand why the logical framework should ignore Israel's ongoing occupation of parts of southern Lebanon, its continued breaches of Lebanese airspace, and its threat to United Nations forces in southern Lebanon, all of which pose a genuine danger to Lebanon's sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity. In other words, Israel continues to act in violation of resolution 1559 (2004). Instead, the logical framework focuses on premeditated and erroneous interpretations made by the Secretary-General's Special Envoy to distract attention from Israel's failure to comply with resolution 1559 (2004).

Moreover, although resolution 1559 (2004) provides for the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Lebanon, the Secretariat neglected to cite that as an expected accomplishment. That represents a very odd disregard of the continued presence of Israeli forces on Lebanese territory. Indeed, they are present there in several places at this very moment. That demonstrates the bias and lack of neutrality in the logical framework of that part of the budget.

We welcome the General Assembly's recognition of the concerns expressed by my delegation and its call on the Secretary-General to review all special political missions. In that respect, I note in particular the budget of the Secretary-General's Special Envoy for the Implementation of Security Council Resolution 1559 (2004). We also stress the General Assembly's adoption of a review of the logical framework to ensure that programmatic aspects and resource requirements are in line with legislative mandates. We look forward to receiving the report on that review requested by the General Assembly from the Secretary-General as soon as possible, and no later than the second resumed session. We believe that such is the understanding reached this evening.

In that regard, we expect the Secretariat to take the concerns I have just expressed seriously in its preparation of the revised logical framework and the proposed budget for special political missions. In that respect, my delegation also notes that the General Assembly has reduced the budget proposed by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, as it was not convinced by the justifications put forward regarding resources, including those related to financing the budget of the Secretary-General's Special Envoy for the Implementation of Security Council Resolution 1559 (2004). That is a fundamental issue around which a strong negotiating position emerged in support of our view.

We welcome the emphasis which the resolution places on the need to respect the provisions of paragraph 9 of resolution 55/231, in which the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to ensure that expected accomplishments and, where possible, indicators of achievement were included to measure

achievements in the implementation of the programmes of the Organization and not those of individual Member States. We note the General Assembly's request to the Secretary-General that he submit his future budget proposals in full compliance with its resolution 55/231.

In conclusion, allow me to stress the substance of paragraph 5 of part VII of the resolution, which underlines the continued importance of the Secretary-General's ensuring, when appointing his Special Representatives and Envoys, the highest standards of integrity, competency, impartiality and professionalism. We are convinced that the Secretary-General Designate will rely fully on those guidelines in appointing all his new special envoys and representatives.

Mrs. Pohjankukka (Finland): The European Union wishes to speak briefly on part VII, concerning special political missions, of resolution 61/252.

We wish to underscore the great importance we attach to all 27 special political missions. We would therefore like to make clear our understanding of how the adjustments in resource levels agreed in the resolution will be applied within part III of the budget. We understand, and heard several delegations in the formal meeting of the Fifth Committee confirm, that those would be applied in accordance with the recommendations set out in paragraph 91 of the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) and as clarified by the ACABQ Chairman when he introduced his report in a formal meeting of the Fifth Committee.

The President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 117.

Agenda item 116

Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/61/667)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 8 of its report (A/61/667) and a draft decision recommended by the Committee in paragraph 9 of the same report. The text of the draft resolution is contained, for the time being, in document A/C.5/61/L.21. The text of the draft decision is contained, for the time being, in document A/C.5/61/L.31. We will now take a decision on the draft resolution and on the draft decision.

The draft resolution is entitled "Proposed programme budget outline for the biennium 2008-2009", and the Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 60/254).

The President: We will now take action on draft decision entitled "Questions deferred for future consideration". The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft decision was adopted.

The President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 116 and has thus concluded its consideration of all the reports of the Fifth Committee before it.

Programme of work

The President: With regard to the programme of work of the General Assembly apart from the organizational methods and items that may have to be considered by operation of the rules of procedure of the Assembly, and bearing in mind that the Assembly has already considered and acted on a majority of items, I should like to inform members that the following remain open for consideration during the sixty-first session: agenda items 11, 12 to 15, 17, 19 to 27, 32, 33, 42, 44 to 47, 52, 68, 90, 100, 105(a), (b), (d) and (e), 106(h), 107, 108(a), (h), (l), (o) and (p), 110 to 147, 149 and 151 to 155.

May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to take note of those agenda items that remain open for consideration during the sixty-first session of the Assembly?

It was so decided.

The President: This is the final plenary meeting of the main part of the sixty-first session of the General Assembly. It has been an honour for me to preside over this busy and productive period during the past few months.

The plenary met 84 times and the General Committee five times, and there were 20 informal

consultations. We adopted 254 resolutions. We also held four meetings of the tenth emergency special session.

I would like to thank the Chairpersons of the Main Committees for the leadership they have shown, which has enabled us to conclude our busy schedule in an efficient and timely manner. I wish also to extend my sincere appreciation to the Vice-Presidents and to the Bureaux of the six Main Committees for supporting the Assembly's work.

As I noted in my opening statement at the 1st meeting of the session, we are an organization of hope based upon commitment, consensus and co-existence. We all have a stake in achieving a safer and fairer world. It is only by working together to address the many challenges our world is facing that we can make such an achievement a reality.

During this part of the session, I have worked with Member States and Secretary-General Kofi Annan to build bridges and trust. I intend to continue to do the same when Secretary-General-designate Ban Ki-moon takes office in the New Year.

The Assembly has shown that when we are united in partnership and when we overcome mistrust, we can achieve much more for each other. The adoption of the resolution on strengthening Economic and Social Council is a good example of this fact.

We have also made progress in many other areas of our common agenda. We had important debates on Security Council reform and General Assembly revitalization. We adopted two important international conventions, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance.

During this important and busy transition phase, we were also able to finalize the appointment of the Secretary-General-designate, Ban Ki-moon and to pay tribute to the successful tenure of Secretary-General Kofi Annan and bid him farewell.

I was encouraged by the constructive spirit that prevailed during the debate on Security Council reform. And I believe that there is clearly a growing desire to establish a credible process for achieving a meaningful outcome in this outstanding area of reform. Although some differences remain, I believe that in the New Year we will be able to look at this matter in a fresh light.

We also had a successful debate on the revitalization of the General Assembly. Many members noted that we should become more focused on strategic issues and more action-oriented so that our work would have greater visibility and impact.

The informal thematic debate on development was an example of the General Assembly increasing its visibility. We broadened our discussions to involve the private sector and civil society. The Islamic Development Bank announced the creation of a $10 billion poverty eradication fund, to which even the poorest developing countries will contribute.

We have made progress on Secretariat and management reform and worked hard to obtain a satisfactory conclusion to the debate on a new scale of assessments. In addition, work on the renovation of the United Nations Headquarters in New York will soon commence with the adoption of the resolution on the capital master plan.

Working together, we have built confidence among Member States in order to make good progress in the mandate review exercise, which has now been extended until the end of the sixty-first session.

We have also established a process on environmental governance in order to reach agreement on steps to enable the United Nations system to have a more effective impact on environmental issues.

I hope that, building on the work of the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force, we can fully implement the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and in the New Year reach consensus on a comprehensive convention on international terrorism.

Promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women is an integral aspect of achieving the Millennium Development Goals. In March next year, the General Assembly will hold its second informal thematic debate on the promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women, in order to help make such equality and empowerment a reality. A successful outcome will again demonstrate that the General Assembly can have an impact on the issues that really count.

While the forces of globalization and mass communication have brought us closer together, they have also made us more aware of our cultural

differences. In order to promote greater dialogue and tolerance among civilizations and cultures, I intend to convene a third informal interactive thematic debate in the summer of 2007.

We have many important matters of common concern that require our close attention when we return. I hope that we can begin the New Year by working even more closely together in a spirit of cooperation, mutual trust and collective responsibility.

Finally, I would also like to commend the dedication and commitment of all the staff working in the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management, the interpreters and everyone else working behinds the scenes to ensure that our work runs smoothly. I thank them once again for all their support and hard work, and wish them all a very happy holiday.

The meeting rose at 11.50 p.m.